Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf

Central Secretariat

Mr. Anwaar Ul Haq Kakar,
Caretaker Prime Minister.
Government of Pakistan.

Oct 3rd, 2023

SUBJECT: <u>THE USAGE OF ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES AS PART OF A PRE-POLL RIGGING CAMPAIGN AGAINST PTI</u>

Dear Prime Minister Sahib,

I hope this letter finds you in good health. On behalf of the PTI Core Committee, I wanted to bring to your attention perhaps the most serious of all the violations of the law and the Constitution happening right now as part of an orchestrated pre-poll election rigging campaign against PTI, the issue of enforced disappearances.

In the context of preparation for a free, fair, and impartial election, the impunity with which individuals linked to PTI are being illegally arrested and disappeared, is perhaps the most blatant and open form of pre-poll rigging happening in the country. Even more than that, it is an exceptionally serious violation of Pakistan's system of law and justice of the sort that has not been seen before, certainly not in recent history. Behind each disappearance, remember that there are families suffering, mothers and fathers, wives, brothers and sisters, and children.

As I write this, the following individuals remain victim to this campaign of enforced disappearances, and are missing:

1. **Sadaqat Ali Abbasi:** Former PTI MNA. Missing since 1st September.
2. **Usman Dar:** Former PTI SAPM. Missing since 10th September.
3. **Abdul Kareem Khan:** PTI ticket holder from Lahore. Missing since September 19th.
4. **Awais Younus:** PTI Lahore Secretary Information. Missing since September 19th.
5. **Farrukh Habib:** Former Federal Minister of State. Missing since 27th September.
6. **Sheikh Rasheed:** Former Federal Minister, head of his own political party and PTI ally. Missing since 17th September.

Sir, I don't need to remind you that these enforced disappearances are in direct violation of several articles of the Constitution of Pakistan, including Article 9 (Security of person), Article 10 (Safeguards as to arrest and detention – under which anyone detained in custody must be produced before a magistrate within 24 hours), Article 10A (Right to fair trial) and Article 14 (Inviolability of dignity of man and – which protects the privacy of homes and bans any form of torture in custody); as well as the constitutionally guaranteed right of life.

This campaign, with the sole purpose of trying to break PTI, Pakistan's most popular political party, also makes a complete mockery of the Election Act 2017. In the context of the very primary responsibility of

caretaker governments to hold free and fair elections, this campaign of enforced disappearances violates Section.230 (1)(d) in which the Caretaker Government has a duty to "be impartial to every person and political party", and Section. 186 (d), in which no official can execute any act "calculated to influence the result of the election."

Finally, these enforced disappearances also contravene Pakistan's commitments on several international covenants and treaties that deal with such matters, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), as well as the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED), which is obligatory upon Pakistan under customary international law principles.

These of course are not the only cases that have happened in this year.

Perhaps in the most prominent case, journalist Imran Riaz Khan has resurfaced after almost 140 days of captivity, shockingly having lost 22 kg of weight and his ability to speak. Remember that Imran Riaz was one of the most vocal critics of the government since the vote of no confidence against Imran Khan. Other journalists have been luckier in being disappeared for shorter lengths of time, including Jameel Farooqui and Sami Abrahim. Even lawyers such as Uzair Bhandari have not been spared.

Several of the former PM Imran Khan's staff were also disappeared for various lengths of time. These included Azhar Mashwani (Focal Person on social media to Chairman PTI Imran Khan whose brother was also disappeared for an extended length of time), Sajjad Ali Khan (Personal Secretary to the Chairman), and Col. Asim, Iftikhar Ghumman and Shahid Khan from amongst the Chairman's security staff.

Many of our young volunteer social media activists have not been spared, including Mian Waqas, Wasif Kazmi, Arshad Siddiqui, Fahad Siddiqui, Mudassir Rehman, Obaid ur Rehman, Atta ur Rehman, Majid Tajik, and Salman Latif.

Some of the political figures who disappeared and then inexplicably resurfaced include Senator Aon Abbas Buppi, former MPA Ghazain Abbasi and PTI Spokesperson Iftikhar Durrani. Sadly, even the families of political figures have not been spared, with Murad Akbar (brother of former SAPM on Accountability Shehzad Akbar), Farrukh Afridi (brother of Shehryar Afridi), and Omar Awan (brother of former MNA Ali Awan) all disappearing for extended lengths of time; and in another recent case, Zahoor Mashwani, brother of Azhar Mashwani, a professor and a father of four, also disappearing for 140 days before recently reappearing.

Even civil servants such as Azam Khan (former Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister), and Muhammad Bhatti (Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Parvez Elahi) were made to 'disappear' for several days, in the quest to have them give statements or turn approver against Former Prime Minister and Chairman Imran Khan.

Sir, you will find it fascinating that several mainstream media figures sympathetic to the government openly state that some of these figures were abducted by the state; for example, renowned anchors Ansar Abbasi,

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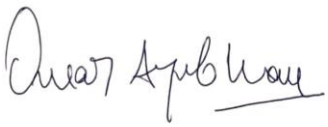
Muneeb Farooq and Mansoor Ali Khan have been openly stating in their vlogs that the state has been responsible for making individuals such as Imran Riaz Khan 'disappear'. In the cases of Usman Dar and Farrukh Habib, ministers in the Sindh and Balochistan Governments have given statements that the state has arrested these individuals, and yet none of them have appeared before a magistrate or a court of law.

Unless these people are released, and the law enforcement agencies, and any other agencies involved are reprimanded to immediately desist from such practices, I am afraid that no question exists of the upcoming elections being even remotely free or fair.

We hope that you will treat this matter with the urgency and seriousness it deserves, note what is happening, and discharge your duty in passing immediate and clear instructions to the government to produce these people, and to immediately desist from such activities in the future.

A copy of this letter is also being sent to the four Caretaker Chief Ministers, responsible for the executive arm of government in each of the provinces.

Sincerely,



Omar Ayub Khan
Secretary General
Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf

Copy To: *Chief Ministers of Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan.*